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ABSTRACT

The humanities are not emphasized in two-year colleges, although junior/community colleges enroll over 30% of all students in post-secondary education. The Center for the Study of Community Colleges is engaged in a multi-phased research project designed to provide information for the National Endowment for the Humanities, which wishes to strengthen the humanities in two-year colleges. Two project phases, including a literature review and a national survey of humanities faculty, have been completed. The survey yielded a great deal of information about humanities faculty. About one-fourth had been students in two-year colleges. Fourteen percent now hold the Ph.D. or the Ed.D. The male/female ratio is 2:1 with affirmative action slowly taking hold. This group has broken almost completely with the secondary schools. It is believed that humanities faculty are becoming very insular while being relatively well satisfied with their present job situations. Recommendations for strengthening the humanities in two-year colleges have developed as a result of seminars held to discuss the survey data. These include: in-service training of faculty, dissemination of information through numerous media, advisory task forces, and conferences. Educators do not yet realize the dire situation of the humanities but must take action to insure the humanities' survival without repeating past mistakes. (JDS)

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The Faculty and the Humanities: Two Endangered Species

Arthur M. Cohen, U.C.L.A.

The National Endowment for the Humanities is the only federal agency dedicated exclusively to promoting and supporting the humanities in American life. It does a superb job and, considering its limited budget, has influence far beyond its means. It is not my place to recount the Endowment's achievements; suffice to say that millions of people have been touched directly by its public programs, thousands by its research grants, fellowships, and education divisions, and other millions indirectly through the efforts of those who have been educated and encouraged to act under its auspices.

We are here because of the Endowment's interest in the humanities in higher education. Many of you have been direct recipients of its awards and others have been affected by its work in your own and neighboring institutions. I represent the Center for the Study of Community Colleges, a research organization dedicated to doing just what its name implies. We assess community college programs, analyzing their directions and making recommendations for further involvements. We study the literature in the field, conduct surveys, and assist policy makers in planning the future of these institutions.

Two-year colleges currently enroll more than thirty percent of all students in post-secondary education in America, a figure that has increased markedly in recent years as the growth rate of these institutions has progressed at a pace greater than that of the senior colleges and universities. Nevertheless, except in a few small independently controlled institutions, the humanities

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are not widely emphasized in two-year colleges. Curriculum trends in recent years seem to have gone in other directions. Those of us on the side of the humanities deplore this and each has his own explanation for it. Whatever the reason, trustees, administrators, faculty members, and state-level planners see a plethora of roles for the colleges. The perpetuation and diffusion of the humanities typically occupies a priority status far below that of career education, remedial studies, adult basic education, and programs of immediate utility. These perceptions influence legislation, policy decisions, college planning and budgeting and, not least, the patterns of curriculum and staffing.

The National Endowment for the Humanities is concerned with strengthening the humanities in two-year colleges. It needs information about the status of these programs: who teaches them, who studies in them, what the trends really are. In order to develop this information, the Endowment called on the Center for the Study of Community Colleges to engage in a multi-phased research project. The first phase, begun in 1974, yielded reviews of the literature pertinent to humanities faculty, curriculum and instruction, and students. The second phase included a nationwide survey of full- and part-time faculty members in which a precise sample of instructors in 156 colleges was drawn and an eleven-page questionnaire distributed and retrieved from 84% of those surveyed. This procedure yielded authentic data pertaining to people teaching history, literature, foreign languages, and sixteen other disciplines under the humanities rubric. The next phase will be a study of curriculum and

instruction, while a later phase will deal with students' attitudes toward the humanities.

My report today is based on what we have learned about the faculty teaching the humanities in community colleges. The reviews of the literature that we developed in the first phase of the study are available to you on request from the Center. Here I will report on the new data that we generated in our national survey and discuss what I believe to be the implications of these data for the humanities, the faculty, and the community colleges themselves.

The faculty survey was designed to yield a great deal of information about the people teaching the humanities (which we defined as courses in any of 19 disciplines). We wanted to know how they relate to other instructors in their field, to their students, and to their professional organizations. We wanted to know their own degrees of satisfaction and desires for professional development. We wanted to know what they thought about the humanities, who their reference groups are, how they spend their time. In short, we wanted to develop a comprehensive picture of the faculty.

We found that about one-fourth of the faculty had themselves been students in community or junior colleges but only 15% had received the associate degree. Almost all faculty hold the bachelor's and 90% a master's. Our findings on doctoral degree holders are of particular interest. Traditionally two-year college faculty members have acquired a doctorate after some years on the job--that is, they do not enter the institution holding that degree but earn it at a later time. This was confirmed in our study because over one-third of the people with doctorates are age 51 or older whereas fewer than one-fourth of the total sample are in this older age group. In addition, 19% of the people teaching humanities hold their highest degree in Education, thus suggesting that the person with a

master's in a teaching discipline picks up a doctorate in Education while he is employed as an instructor.

A much higher percentage of instructors have the doctorate today than even five years ago. We found 14% of the faculty with the Ph.D., Ed.D., or other doctoral degree as compared to 8 to 10% in studies done in the late 1960's. The apparent reason is that the growth in faculty has slowed down considerably. Heretofore, faculty members who attained doctorates while they were on the job were balanced by the influx of new people without higher degrees, thus maintaining a constant ratio. Now that the percentage of new full-timers employed annually has dropped off considerably, the tendency of working faculty to obtain the advanced degree has moved the percentage of doctorate holders higher.

Further, 24% of our sample say they are working on a doctorate now. If only one-fourth of these instructors get the degree by 1980, the ratio of doctorates will increase to 20% of the full-time faculty. Add to that the likelihood that a greater number of new full-time staff members will have doctorates and a 22% total figure by 1980 is not unrealistic. In short, we are forecasting a rapid upturn in the percentage of full-time academic faculty members with doctoral degrees.

Affirmative action seems to be taking hold only slowly. We found a ratio of two to one males over females, rather a constant with the ratio reported in earlier studies. There are very few ethnic minorities teaching humanities; 2.6% Blacks, 1.9% Chicanos, less than 1% Asian-Americans. In new colleges--opened in the past five years--a higher percentage of the faculty is female and/or younger than in older institutions but ethnic minorities are not represented there to any greater degree.

Taken as a whole, the faculty are strongly against preferential hiring for

women and/or minority group members at their own college (61% against 24% for). Support for strict enforcement of affirmative action policies tends to come from the part-timers with no outside employment, from the women and ethnic minorities, and especially from the younger instructors. The opponents are older white males, either full-time instructors or part-timers with regular employment elsewhere. Because the older white males are highly represented among administrators and division and department chairpersons--the power structure in the colleges--we do not expect affirmative action to have much effect on the sex and ethnic composition of the colleges any time soon. And, incidentally, my saying this to a group of administrators earlier this year brought shrieks of denial. Each president adamantly pointed out how he was rigorously pursuing the problem of ethnic and sex discrimination in employment at his own institution. Single colleges may be exceptional, but I must stand by our data; nationwide there are <u>not</u> representative numbers of women and minority group members among the teaching faculty, even among the part-timers who are employed on an hourly basis.

We particularly wanted to get information about the differences between full-time and part-time humanities faculty members in the colleges surveyed. We found part-timers to be highly represented in religious studies, foreign languages, and art. This is probably because local ministers frequently teach religious studies; teachers from the local high schools often teach English as a Second Language; and artists who work at other pursuits may teach art history. One third of the part-timers have no employment other than their work at the college. The older ones are probably retired people teaching one or two courses. Many of the younger ones are trying to get into full-time teaching at the same time that they complete their graduate studies at a nearby university. Nearly half the

part-timers are age 35 or younger.

Part-timers tend to be less experienced than full-timers. They read fewer scholarly or professional journals, are less likely to be members of professional associations, are less concerned with research, curriculum and instruction, and with the humanities, and are more likely to hold the university as a reference group. However, they are much like the full-timers in terms of their concern for students, levels of satisfaction, and the types of training they prefer. Colleges in the South tend to be heavily weighted toward full-time faculty members. The large Western institutions are heaviest in part-timers.

We were interested in determining who the two-year college faculty see as their role models because one's dominant reference group affects heris professional orientation. We asked the respondents to rate eight designated reference groups as sources of advice on teaching and also asked questions regarding the types of positions that would appear attractive to them in five years. We found that instructors who look to the university as their reference group are chiefly those who have not been teaching very long in the two-year college. They think that people with doctoral degrees are more capable or knowledgeable, and they have a stronger orientation toward their academic discipline.

The instructors' attitudes toward high schools are of note here; as a group the faculty have broken almost completely with the lower schools. Although half the faculty in our sample have had secondary school experience, people in this group tend to be older and are not being replaced as rapidly as they once were. More to the point, few of the faculty want anything to do with the secondary schools, seeing teachers there as poor sources of advice on teaching, not attempting

to articulate curriculum with them.

When asked how they would spend their working days if they had free choice in the matter, over 50% of the respondents indicated they would give more time to their graduate education, and to research or professional writing. Student interaction outside class, personal affairs, and planning instruction were favored by nearly half. Over one-third reported they would spend less time than they now do in administrative affairs.

Almost all (86%) said that within the next five years they would like to take steps toward professional development. In order of popularity, these steps were to get a Ph.D. or Ed.D., enroll in courses in a university, enroll in in-service courses at their college, get a master's degree, and get a Doctor of Arts degree. If they had a free summer, traveling and taking classes/reading/studying seemed most appealing.

The number of hours faculty spend in the classroom seems to be dropping. National Education Association studies done in 1974 and 1971 showed a mean centering on 17 hours. As of Spring 1975 the humanities faculty at least, seem to be spending somewhat less time than that in classroom instruction. Almost one-third of the respondents reported 13 to 15 hours of classroom teaching, while 17% indicated 10 to 12 hours, and 13%, 15 to 18 hours.

Several other questions about faculty work patterns are of note: 76% indicated that in the past three years they had attended an off-campus conference or symposium related to teaching; 73% used a syllabus for teaching their courses; and 93% said they had revised their syllabus and/or teaching objectives in the past three years. On the other hand, only a few had done a student teaching assignment in a two-year college or authored or co-authored a published

book. Eight percent had received a stipend or grant from a private foundation (e.g., Ford or Danforth), although over 16% had received such assistance from their college and 16% from a state or federal agency, such as the National Endwoment for the Humanities.

Are the faculty satisfied? We asked questions such as whether if they had a chance to retrace their steps, they would choose an academic life and we asked about conditions at their own institutions--autonomy, job security, freedom to choose materials, etc. We found that satisfaction is not related to the number of hours taught weekly. Nor is it related to full-time or part-time status. In fact, it seems generally unrelated to institutional conditions, more a personality trait that transcends the working environment. Perhaps this is not a surprise--happy people are happy people--but it does weaken the argument that faculty members would be more satisfied if they taught fewer hours or had better working conditions. Members of the satisfied group tend to be older, a finding that is confirmed by studies of satisfaction in other fields. The less satisfied are young people, working on doctorates, who would prefer teaching at a four-year institution.

Data are one thing, interpretations another. Much of our new information leads us to believe that faculty members in community colleges are becoming exceedingly insular. They see their own colleagues and students as the best sources of advice on teaching. They are interested in curriculum and instruction, in working on their courses, and on their teaching almost to the exclusion of other professional pursuits. When given a choice among eight possible career lines, they chose, "Doing what I'm doing now" as most attractive. They are relatively well-satisfied teachers with a frame of reference almost exclusively focused on their own work.

Perhaps this is laudable but it can be interpreted another way. Disciplinary affiliation is weak among two-year college faculty. Many instructors teach in two or more fields, understandable because few colleges have enrollments large enough to support a full-time instructor in cultural anthropology, art history, music appreciation, or cultural geography; hence the teacher's schedule is filled out with other courses. And the lack of orientation toward research--reinforced by the lack of reward for doing it and the teaching load--weaken disciplinary ties. The faculty's localism, lack of affiliation with national professional groups, and failure to read or write in the professional literature, make it difficult for them to maintain currency in their field. What will happen to the humanities as these tendencies become more marked?

You may be interested in the reactions of others to whom these findings have been presented. We invited college administrators and division chairpersons, state-agency officials and professional association representatives to seminars in the West, Midwest, and East earlier this year to discuss implications of the data. I have already mentioned the presidents' defensiveness when they heard the figures on women and minority group representation. The groups had some positive recommendations as well:

> Because interdisciplinary courses were mentioned repeatedly by the faculty as useful for breaking the pattern of traditional teaching in the humanities, the seminar participants felt that faculty members who are involved in first-level screening of job applicants should be encouraged to recommend candidates oriented toward interdisciplinary teaching, lest the president never see the names of those who might be more suitable than traditional instructors. For the same reason they felt the credentialling structure should be reviewed--does it penalize instructors with an interdisciplinary bent?

The relationship between the university as a participant in pre-service or in-service training of two-year college faculty members came under attack. Many of the participants felt that the universities were not serving the community colleges well unless they offered courses in late afternoons and on weekends so that full-time instructors could attend. The seminar participants readily agreed that employment of new staff would be severely restricted in coming years and that any involvement by the university would have to center on in-service education. Further, the groups were emphatic in their views that university offerings should not be along traditional academic disciplinary lines.

Participants suggested that two-year colleges not reward graduate units taken indiscriminately, but that faculty in-service development be furthered as a campus-based set of programs managed by a resident coordinator. And they felt that training of part-timers was desperately in need of strengthening.

The matter of general policy came in for a good deal of discussion in the seminars. The groups felt that information about the humanities on local, state, and national levels should be disseminated through conventions, professional association meetings, and numerous other channels. By way of continuing a dialogue on the humanities, the Western seminar recommended that the Chancellor's Office and the California Board of Governors consider developing an advisory committee or a task force as a communications link on humanities between the state and the local level. Other recommendations were for further

communication of the humanities through the California Community and Junior College Association (CCJCA) Committee on Instruction, through the annual CCJCA convention, and through drive-in conferences sponsored by that organization. A conference for faculty members and division and department chairpersons in the humanities was proposed.

Although many participants claimed that humanities education at their college was declining, some felt that it was very much a part of the total curriculum. In the Eastern meeting, some administrators noted that at least one humanities course is required for any degree, including occupational and vocational programs, while others reported that a core of humanities courses is required. Moreover, several participants stated that there has been an increase in integrated humanities courses which incorporate interdisciplinary studies and employ team teaching. Nevertheless, there was a consensus among all the groups that the colleges, on the whole, tend not to be committed to education in the humanities. Many of the participants pointed out that humanities courses frequently are offered only to fulfill university-mandated transfer requirements or degree requirements imposed by accrediting agencies.

There was general agreement that few students beginning college are concentrating on taking humanities courses. Instead, for fear of not finding employment, they are attracted to the career-oriented curriculums. Many participants felt, however, that humanities education could be integrated into the technical courses. The goal of humanities education, as one expressed it, is "to train people, not technicians." Suggestions for "Applied Humanities" courses were made and recommendations were offered for establishing non-course related humanities activities. Basically, the groups agreed that humanities education need not be confined within traditional definitions nor implemented

solely through traditional curriculum and instruction channels.

My own interpretations run similar to those mentioned but go somewhat further. I am fascinated with the faculty attitudes themselves. The full-time instructors are concerned with their students, with their teaching, and with the humanities, and many undoubtedly try to foster humanities programs on their campuses. But the faculty seem unaware of several overarching problems that affect the humanities--employment patterns, for example. There are now more part-time faculty in the two-year colleges of America than full-timers. Although 20 percent of the full-time faculty teach humanities, a constant figure over the years, only 10.7 percent of the part-timers do. The expansion in new college programs, hence in faculty employment, is in other areas--business and management, public affairs and services, home economics, apprenticeships, computer and information science. And these trends are accelerating.

As the full-time faculty shrinks, who will speak for the humanities? The part-timers have no power; they are glad to have work. Few administrators are willing to become advocates for the humanities, pursuing instead those programs that generate the greatest FTE, hence the greatest flow of dollars into the colleges. And the regular faculty themselves exhibit more concern for their own welfare than for that to which they are ostensibly dedicated. Their professional associations argue for higher wages and shorter hours. When their disciplinary associations address the humanities, they consider arcane teaching techniques and disciplinary esoterica. When anyone brings enrollment trends to their attention, they respond by deploring the universities' reduction in course requirements and the community colleges' pandering to student desires for courses of immediate and apparent utility.

It is time for a shift in faculty thinking, a raising of sights, a vision of something more than one's own students and classroom. Consider examples from

other fields. In 1960 the vocational educators faced a problem of diminution of emphasis at a time when the traditional academic disciplines were being fostered vigorously. That did not stop them from pursuing their objectives and now that they have in effect captured the United States Office of Education along with most state education agencies, they still have not stopped that pursuit. They are organized at regional, state, and national levels into committees, lobby groups, and task forces. Their uniform rallying cry is, "People need to work." They ignore the critics who say that for most jobs, people can learn best in apprenticeships. They ignore the obvious fact that the state of the economy, not the condition of the schools, dictates the job market. Did two million people forget how to work between 1972 and 1974? That many became unemployed. Did 500,000 re-learn how to work in the fall and winter of 1975? That many regained jobs. Similarly, the question of whether we have the right to impose our values on our students, perennially pondered by humanists, seems not to concern the advocates of occupational education who try incessantly to instill the teaching of the work ethic in the public schools.

Similarly, the slogan, "People need health" is vigorously promulgated by those who are concerned with medical practice. They ignore the data showing that seat belts and a 55 mile-an-hour speed limit have more effect on longevity trends than all their pills, and only point to success in peculiar surgical techniques. Their critics question the development of drugs and forms of medication that create more problems than they solve. But that does not stop the advocates of a medical establishment that demands an ever higher proportion of funds to conduct its research and educational programs. And "Allied Health" takes over increasingly large portions of the two-year college curriculum.

The humanities are in trouble. And the biggest problem they face is that educators do not realize their dire state. Except for the Endowment the

humanities have no national lobby groups. They have pathetically few state agencies to speak for them to boards of governors and legislatures. They have few effective local lobbyists who insist on their being included in curriculums. Those who favor the humanities should not be ashamed of adopting the the slogan, "People need to live as humans." They should not be ashamed of imposing the value of an appreciation for the highest forms of man's expression of self through his art, literature, and music. The problem with the humanities is that few people realize how precarious they are now in the face of the strides taken by the occupational and medical educators. Unless the humanities advance they will certainly go backward in relation to those two areas.

The humanities have been in retreat--dropped completely in some colleges. Tim Gunn, of the Endowment's Education Division, expressed his astonishment at learning that the community colleges of Wisconsin are devoid of humanities courses. South Carolina, too, has organized an entire community college system oriented toward career education. During the conduct of the faculty survey, many colleges elsewhere that were invited to participate responded with the comment that since nothing was happening in the humanities at their own institutions, they did not care to take part. This diminution of the humanities may be apparent but only a study of trends in curriculum and instruction, the next project for the Center, will reveal its magnitude. Undoubtedly the colleges' pursuit of manpower training in the second half of the twentieth century has been pronounced. And although for most colleges an emphasis on manpower training may be a delusion as great as that which saw them clingning to the Classics in the middle of the nineteenth century, college leaders tend not to take the long view. They remain

unaware of the potential consequences of their efforts.

What can the individual instructor do? At least he can try to stay current in his discipline--our finding that 23 percent of the full-time humanities instructors read no scholarly or professional journals is deplorable. At least he can support his professional and disciplinary associations--fewer than half the full-timers have attended an association meeting in the past three years; 90 percent of them have never presented a paper; 17 percent are not even nominal members. He can demand that his associations consider arcana less, issues of public policy more. In brief, he can break out of his insularity, his reclusivity, his concern only for a diminishing group of students taking an ever smaller number of humanities courses.

The instructor can do more. He can serve on program articulation committees and beseech his own college and the universities in his area to reinstitute language, history, or other humanities course requirements so that students who intend transferring are obliged to attend. This practice is laudable even as it is shortsighted. The direction of community college expansion is not toward augmenting enrollment of baccalaureate-bound students; it is toward the short course of immediate interest or utility for other types of clients. Further, the transfer student may and frequently does circumvent the requirements by leaving short of the Associate degree. And the universities are glad to take him anyway.

The instructor who believes in both the humanities and the value of his teaching must do much more. He must modify the conditions of his work, expand his role. Those instructors who have gone into public programming, building objectives and criterion tests around Classic Theatre and Ascent of Man, e.g. are examplars of one type of role shift. Another is the instructor who builds media,

reproducible learning packages that can be used by students without his intervention, thus magnifying his influence. A third is the instructor who takes responsiblity for the part-time faculty in his subject area, training them in writing objectives, sharing teaching strategies, and molding them into a support group. And a fourth is the instructor who continually and vigorously promotes concerts, recitals, exhibits and other non-course related humanities programs at his college, who employs more imaginative ways of making the idea of the humanities a topic of public discussion. Some community colleges have periodic health fairs where members of the public are invited in to have their blood pressure checked and X-rays taken. Every one of those should be countered with a humanities festival.

There is yet another possible role, one that combines the humanities with the two-year colleges' move into community-based education, hence would receive extensive support from the administrators in most districts. Let us call this instructor a community scholar. Let us see him as academic advisor to the community, working with a lay advisory committee. The committee might include local talent in the arts, university professors, businessmen, laymen of any stripe. This community scholar would see himself as a full-time professional person. He would have classes, comprised of the usual "credit" students but he would also work in the social processes of the city, getting advice on needed courses, curriculums, and social and cultural events, taking back to the campus ideas for programs to be offered there and elsewhere.

This latter model would accommodate many needs not now being satisfied. Primarily the community college needs a community connection. It needs lay advisors in the humanities, just as it has in the many occupational and para-professional fields. This connection would also allow the instructor, hence the entire campus community, to make input on community decisions where a humanist

would have much to offer. Rare is the city council that calls on the local community college faculty member for advice when a decision is to be reached on the location of a park or on the preservation of an historical building. Yet if a member of that council were a member of an advisory committee to the college's programs, the needed contact would have been made in advance.

The humanities are plagued by genuine but nonetheless deluded apologists who spend too much time quibbling over definitions--"Is political science properly part of the humanities?" "Does the study of music do as much for the student's life as the study of history?"--and not enough time pressing for broad-scale support. Despite their good intentions, they fail to address the main issues. Support for community college humanities programs will come from the community and from state and federal legislators and agency heads. And funding runs not necessarily to programs where student learning in any form is maximized; its routings are determined by political processes. Accordingly, it is important to address the humanities in a political context intramurally and, further, to build an extramural constituency that is supportive of the efforts of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Through its state-based programs the Endowment is trying to encourage humanists to go public, to take positions on issues affecting the quality of life in their area. These efforts need to be furthered by individual instructors who have put their own work orientation on the line.

And yet, humanists must not repeat the errors made in the 1930's and 1940's by the social scientists who insisted that studying the social sciences would lead people to good citizenship. They should not argue that the study of the humanities will necessarily lead people to hold more humane values. Rather, the humanities help people gain a better understanding of man's expressions of

himself, a virtue in its own right. In pursuing the humanities, you in the colleges should not hold them private, withdrawn from the marketplace. A positive approach must be taken, pointing out that the humanities are not archaic, not the property of fusty academics. The humanities can be used in the continuing debate over the quality of life in America. The public needs people trained in humanistic disciplines to provide information on and raise questions about the kind of genetic modifications we should have, the quality of air and water, the patterns of energy use, the kind of life that should be led. The humanities are not a frill; they are essential. And they need your help.

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